

RELATION OF OCCURRENCES

Transmitted by the Undersigned to the friendly consideration of the Honorable the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, connected with a Petition for aid to a Road from Centre through Clearfield and McKean County.

As it may not, in the humble opinion of your Memorialist, be disagreeable for the Members of your Honorable Bodies and for my Fellow-Citizens in general, to relate some interesting events which have happened in the course of my life and are closely connected with it, and which have strengthened me in the conviction that this life from my youth up to this day was but a chain of events linked together by a kind Providence, realising the anticipations had in my native land of my destination in this free country, I shall proceed to the historical statement thereof, hoping to meet in so doing your kind indulgence.

The desire to emigrate first awakened in me in my childhood, in the years from 1770 to 1780, when I frequently heard people talking of the great many emigrants going down the River Rhine on the wood floats, which for the most part came from Wirtemberg, Switzerland and the Palatinate, saying they embarked in Holland for America or the New World, as it was more generally called. This made so much impression on my mind that when sitting at my spinning wheel and spinning my three hanks of cotton daily to earn my bread, a conversation on this subject usually ensued between myself and my

older brothers, and my desire was growing with my mind and body.

When I was five years old I lost my father who was a native of Prussia, born and raised under the reign of Frederick the Great, and destined for a Soldier for life in his elegant and proud Grenadier Regiment cantoned at Hamm in Westphalia. My father, a fine young man about 5 feet 10 inches high and stout built, concluded in his 23d year instead of becoming a recruit to his regiment, to escape and emigrate to my native country, called the Duchy of Berg, then belonging to the Palatinate, where he although a farmer's son and raised to the farming business himself till 23 years of age, resolved to learn the White Smith's trade, as my native place was a manufacturing place. He bound himself as an apprentice for 3 years, in which time he learned the trade and became the successor of his master, as the latter had deceased. My father carried on his trade with good success until in his forty ninth year, 1770, when he died and left my mother a widow with six children among whom I was the fourth. My mother, a women obedient to her God and true to her duties for her large and numerous family of infant children, had a number of journeymen and conducted the trade for one year entirely under her own controul; after she married the foreman of her shop and we ~~received~~ a step-father who held us to hard work and learnt us to be obedient to our God, parents and neighbours. As I was of a pretty large body in my tenth year, I was taken in the shop at that age to work with the other journeymen, and felt soon am-

received

bitious enough not to remain behind them with my day's work; my desire, however, for this country was daily supported with ideas as are generally brought forward by innocent plans.

In my eighteenth my older brother had lived four years in Amsterdam, where he worked as journeyman with a Scale-beam maker; he had taken the fever and ague, and was advised by his doctor to remove to his native country for his recovery. This occurrence attracted my attention, and I requested my brother after he had arrived home to apply to his master to take me in his place, which was accepted by the returning of the mail from Amsterdam. I entered my new employment in Amsterdam in 1783, where I worked about a year in which time disturbances took place between Holland and England, and commerce became much interrupted, so that my employer was obliged to discharge a number of hands, among whom I was also. Meeting no chance of becoming acquainted with any American house or man, I returned in 1784 to my native place, and assumed the new trade learnt in Holland. I devoted my time entirely for the benefit of my step-father, till I was twenty three, in the year 1788, when I married and commenced business on my own account, without any means or money, in Co-partnership with my brother-in-law, J. P. Hermes, under the firm of Hermes & Karthaus, in 1791. I made my first journey in my manufacturing and commercial capacity to Holland, and carried on my business to good success; and the French revolution having broken out in its greatest violence, I soon found employment

enough to make Iron money chests for the French emigrants, who, with their money came to foreign countries, especially to Germany, and my place of residence being so near the river Rhine and the French borders, soon became overflowed alternately by them and by Austrian, Prussian and other German troops in their marches back and forward.

In 1795, a powerful French army crossed the river Rhine, took possession of my native country, and soon afterwards, by the proclamation of the Code of Napoleon, almost all intercourse became so much interrupted that the commercial relations between our country, Holland and France were entirely cut off. The arrear guard of the French army having liberty to plunder in all the places where they went to, my step-father in particular became so great a sufferer, and his commercial connexion with Holland being entirely cut off, he resolved to emigrate with his son from Amsterdam to America, and arrived early in the year 1796 in Baltimore, where, having no money nor means to pay for his passage, he was obliged to bind himself for a term of years to a black smith and his son to a baker, and had to eat their meals with negro slaves on the same table in the kitchen.

My mother, then still living in Germany, became much alarmed about her husband, got sick and struck with the palsy; but got better. This circumstance in connexion with others of a political and commercial nature, soon caused my resolution to prepare for this country, and an amicable arrangement soon being effected with my co-partner, to

whom I trusted my affairs and wife and children, I embarked in July, 1796, on board the American ship *Portsmouth*, of *Portsmouth*, with about 300 passengers, and arrived on the 10th of October the same year in the *Delaware* at the hospital near Fort Mifflin.

I cannot pass without a remark on the distressing condition of the passengers on board the said ship, who suffered so severely by disease and deaths, that only a few remained of the whole company to see Philadelphia, the greatest number died at sea and the hospital; which was owing to two large copper kettles not tinned, in which the victuals and water were preserved and put in for the whole night, and which created poison to such a degree as to cause the death of the passengers. This at least was the decided opinion of the doctor at the hospital. Although I was sick the whole journey, I got clear by a narrow escape, and arrived at last with the market cart from the hospital at Philadelphia, where I without any particular acquaintance of friends or knowledge of language stayed but a short time, and proceeded to Baltimore, to relieve my step-father and brother from further servitude.

After I had settled my mind to make this country my further and permanent residence, I fetched my wife and children over, and brought them to Baltimore, in 1802, after which time I followed my business in this new country to a successful issue, till in 1806, when I obtained my certificate of becoming a citizen of the United States. After the embargo of 1808, I made another journey to my

native country, Holland and France, and returned in 1810 successful to my new adopted country.

The interruption of commerce throughout Germany and all parts of the continent of Europe, as far as the power and influence of Napoleon extended, was now so much, and the exactions so great, that hardly any hope for relieve to the manufacturing and mercantile class remained, and my desire for a substantial land establishment was increased much more than before in a country suitable for manufacturing purposes, and to give my German relations a chance for a better situation than under Napoleon's system, as no man, not even the wisest, could then form an idea of his overthrow or that France would ever recede from her confined code of commerce adopted by him.

In 1811, I became acquainted and concerned with the Allegheny Coal Company in New York, incorporated in that state. They had purchased a body of land in Clearfield county, state of Pennsylvania, for the purpose of digging coals for the use of the New York market. As the progress did not appear productive, the members requested me to travel up and examine the works and situation, and give my best opinion on the subject, which was done in 1812 by a journey from Baltimore up the West branch of the Susquehanna, which I had to perform partly on horseback and partly in a canoe, as that part was yet a wilderness and destitute of any road. After my return I made my report and communicated the same personally in New York, by which occasion I re-

ceived the flattering honor of the new establishment being called **Karthaus**. A large purchase of land was made of **John Hollowell** and **John Keating** of **Philadelphia**, **Ch. Smith** of **Lancaster**, and **Elias Bundenot** of **Burlington, New Jersey**, and a fair commencement made by building a grist and saw mill, in hopes that roads would be made by the supervisors of the taxes due of the unsettled lands, applications were made to the counties of **Centre** and **Clearfield**, orders obtained, surveyors employed to view the county roads—but no attention was paid by any supervisors, and I was obliged to cut a road for my own use, as stated in my **Memoir**.

In 1815, after peace was restored between the **United States** and **Great Britain**, all the prospect of the **Susquehanna** coal trade ceased at once, and I was persuaded to build an **Iron furnace**, under a glorious statement and calculation. I agreed and a commencement was made, which took so long a time, and the progress was so slow, that I concluded in 1817, to move up with my whole family for my permanent residence, still under full hopes that something would be done towards the road. The furnace did not come into operation until 1818, and I discovered to my great sorrow that I was quite deceived by erroneous calculations in the furnace as well as in roads. After the lapse of about two years, having no schools where to educate the children, we concluded to return to **Baltimore** for some time till we became better roads. I employed a manager to attend to my business during my absence till 1821, when we went up a second time, but had to return

again in 1823, as my family would not remain any longer in the country.

I concluded to stay by myself with a manager, became elected supervisor for two years, by which time, with some exertion on the part of Jefferson and M'Kean counties, a bridle road was opened which served as a post road. As our commercial transactions turned out bad and a losing business, my son-in-law and daughter with a numerous family moved up, and by having a law passed for a turnpike company from Millsburg to Smithport, I was in hopes with aid of the people in Centre county and the landholders in Philadelphia, that my wish would soon be realised.

This is the relation of the occurrences which have brought me to this country and to the state of Pennsylvania, a copy whereof I transmitted for examination to the board of Internal Improvement in Philadelphia, and was highly approved of by the same. This Memoir will show the great exertions I have made since ten years by the supervisors, landholders and the state legislature, and that I never have been able to obtain any aid towards any road. The utilities have frequently been stated, and the great sufferings of that section of Pennsylvania, and the great benefits that would arise from a direct road from the centre of the state on account of the shortness of the distance, first, for a new branch of commerce to the lakes and Upper Canada, the fur trade, which found only its market at Quebec, and now flows to New York and is very important; secondly, for the agriculture of a large district, wherein 10 counties are

connected; and also thirdly, for a new crisis for resources to the state by travelling by a direct turnpike from Centre to Buffaloe, all turnpikes East and South from Centre, where the state is much interested, such as from Philadelphia by Reading, Sunbury, Arnsburg, to Centre, and also from Philadelphia by Lancaster and others, leading to Harrisburg, Lewistown and Bellefonte. This must certainly draw the attention of Legislature. The contemplated National Road will undoubtedly be connected with this road, and Congress may ultimately attach them together and declare a free turnpike.

I ought to receive the honor of being considered the instigator of the contemplated National Road or direct turnpike from Centre to Buffaloe, on account of my improvement of that part of wilderness in the state of Pennsylvania, and no doubt, if accomplished this road will cause many to travel this route from North to South and from East to West.— Whether I am worthy to be called a good Republican and whether I have shown any Patriotism during the last war, I have to refer to my Fellow-Citizens of Baltimore and to the Records of the City of Washington; and whether a good Patriot who spent the flower of his life and the greater part of his hard earned property in cultivating and making such important improvements, deserves any portion of encouragement by an appropriation or protection of his labor, depends altogether on the good will and generosity of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Also whether they make any dis-

inction in such case or in a Land Speculator, I have no right to judge.

One thing is sure and cannot be denied, that is, had Legislature reflected ten years ago on my recommendations and various petitions, and aided and granted us only a small appropriation, they would see now new towns sprung up and large bodies of land turned before this time into fields, the wild beasts destroyed, and large flocks of sheep and cattle in their stead pasturing in such a fine grazing country. By that means, emigration out of the state would have been prevented, and hundreds of new settlers would have come in, of which I can give sufficient proofs.

The Minerals become every year more visible, and will in a few years after that road is made, give thousands of people employment, by which means that part undoubtedly will become a large manufacturing portion of the state of Pennsylvania.

The distance from Bellefonte is so trifling and will not exceed 80 miles to be turnpiked in the state of Pennsylvania, and the costs will be much less than on any turnpike made in the state, owing to its location and materials, and it has often been stated by people who know the ground, that for less than one thousand dollars on an average a good turnpike may be made, and the bridging will be nothing to compare with the building of bridges over the main river of the Susquehanna.

A water communication from the Susquehanna up the West branch will make this turnpike indispensable, and secure a continual communication

through Winter and Sommer. Four horses stages will soon run after the turnpike is finished, full of passengers from East and South through that healthy part of Pennsylvania, to the great wonders of Niagara, and to the new resources of trade, the lakes. No man who has any geographical or commercial knowledge, can ~~not~~ contradict my statement.

Gentlemen of the Legislature please reflect that I do not pray for myself but for hundreds and thousands who never have seen nor ever will see me, and a few thousand acres ought not to be separated from such a large section of the country. Therefore my prayers are not partial prayers, but for the Community at large, and I hope to see before long the long prevailing prejudice against that section disappear through the wonderful augmentation of the populace by industrious settlers.

If my hopes should be realised and Legislature will pledge any confidence, I would make the following proposition, viz: If the Legislature would agree to subscribe, or order the Governor so to do, ten thousand dollars, or five hundred shares, twenty dollars each, in the Millsburg and Smithport turnpike, and take five hundred shares in reserve without any interest for five years after the turnpike is finished, I would give security to the state with all my property to redeem the same at that time, and all the benefits arising previous shall fall to the state. Ten thousand dollars are nearly subscribed by individuals, and I flatter myself to obtain of the landholders in Philadelphia a subscription in good land, where the road is to pass through, to the

amount of 20,000 dollars. This land shall be valued at a fair price, now and after the road is finished, and the workmen or contractors paid half in money and half in land, which will settle at once the country, and the residue of land will be more than sufficient worth to redeem the 10,000 dollars reserve stock. This result may reasonably be expected; and will induce Congress or the General Government to subscribe largely, in order to have a straight road on a much shorter distance to Buffaloe, and no doubt the state of New York will without any hesitation make provision to join this great object.

I hope my historical statement may produce a good effect, and hope it will create no offence to any of the members of the Senate nor of the Representatives. It has been given with a free and good patriotic heart, and in hopes that it may meet with a common support of the state, by him who has the honor to call himself

Your most obedient Servant,

P. A. KARTHAUS.

"What I have written is written"—says *Pilate*.

In your station and destiny

You ought to show good judgment and ability.

APPENDIX.

*To the Honorable MATHEW CAREY, President of
Internal Improvement Society, Philadelphia.*

(COPY.)

SIR—Under the impression that the present communication corresponds with the object of your Society, and from the great interest I feel in the improvement of that part of our Commonwealth in which I have my lands, I submit the following to your perusal and consideration.

In 1811, I commenced a settlement on the West branch of the Susquehanna, Clearfield county, in a complete wilderness without any roads save those known only to the wild of the forrest. My calculations rested on the due assistance of the counties of Centre and Clearfield, as is customary; but an order to the Commissioners and Supervisors, and the viewing of a road was all that I could realise, I was consequently compelled to cut a road almost at my own expense from near Millsburg to Karthaus.

In 1816, I obtained a subscription from a few of the Philadelphia landholders towards this road; but a part only was received and invested, owing to bad management of a road agent. In 1817, the people and principally the Iron masters of Centre county petitioned to Legislature for a road from Bellefonte to Toby's Creek or Clarion River so called. A law was passed, commissioners appointed by governor Finlay, the road viewed, and heavy expenses brought on the counties of Centre and Clearfield, but nothing was done further to carry said state road into effect.

The adjoining settlements Jefferson, M'Kean, &c. find it very important and almost indispensable to have a road leading from those counties by the *New German Settlement* (so called) towards Bellefonte, the centre of Pennsylvania. Petitions were presented to Legislature, and the points well explained to the respective committees; the object was highly approved in point of utility, but the numerous demands for various objects and turnpikes in older parts, (although not deficient in roads) would not admit to concentrate sufficient interest towards obtaining an appropriation. The circumstance of those counties through which the road was to pass or thereby to be benefitted, being attached in the representation at Harrisburg to counties not so immediately interested, weakened much the influence that ought duly to have been used. Clearfield is represented with Centre,

Potter and M'Kean	-	-	Lycoming,
Jefferson	-	-	Indiana,
Warren	-	-	Crawford
			or Erie.

I soon perceived the odds of influence against our poor section, and through the surveyor general Cochrane I recommended, under governor Finlay, that a measure to form and establish a permanent Board for Internal Improvement, might be adopted by Legislature. I calculated that an appointment of gentlemen from various parts of the state, unbiased for constituents and free from sectional feeling, to such a Board, would tend more impartially to diffuse improvements, in their end alike beneficial.— At the time of the general appropriation of one mil-

lion of dollars, our counties calculated to receive a small share towards our roads, but very little attention was paid to it by our representatives, they no doubt taking as much as they could obtain for other objects, and perhaps assisting other sections to procure a share, that theirs might likewise be adopted. In 1825, a law was passed to incorporate a Turnpike Company from Millsburg to Smithport, to intersect the road to Olean Point, state of New York.

I now take the liberty to transmit you a copy of a petition and memorial to a select committee for aid from the state, to have the Company incorporated, but through the great Canal Concern no encouragement was given and the affair laid over as unfinished business. A bridle road has been opened by a few individuals, which now serves for the post route established by Congress, and thus, although but in a limited degree, a communication is opened which now connects the centre of the state with the northern boundary in the direction of Buffaloe, and is complete as a mail route even to that place.

The object of carrying a good road through our county has even become important to many members of Congress, and they accordingly recommended it to the consideration of the Secretary of War, who authorized major Long to explore that country. His report only confirms what is long ago known to many, that it affords every facility to make a good road at a moderate expense, and the result for the country would be an infinite advantage.

Although canals when connecting large and navigable waters are of great benefit, yet there are

seasons at which they are useless, and considering the enormous expenses of some, and that many countries will not admit of them, turnpikes ought not to be thrown entirely out of the question. There is now a good one more than half the way to Buffalo by Bellefonte, and I would beg your Honorable Board to urge a continuation of it in that direction. It could be made in one season at a very moderate expense, and would be productive to the state and to the city of Philadelphia in so short a time, besides connecting it at once with 8 counties or a district of about 130 square miles. This road will cost less than any other made in the state, from the excellency of the ground and materials.

Your most obedient Servant,

P. A. KARTHAUS.

The following letter from Mr. *P. E. Scull*, a well known respectable gentleman of M'Kean county, will show the anxiety felt and the exertions making in that county to the accomplishment of our common object. We copy the same here literally, remarking only that we are of firm opinion that our prayers are founded on as good a Municipal claim as to our portion of the blessings of sunshine, and that, if the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which is composed of gentlemen of talents and intelligence, would give our prayers a fair and full investigation, there can be no doubt we would meet with that friendly and just assistance which we have a right to expect. For having no other Tribunal where to look for aid in our common distress, we must submit our prayers to that Honorable Body as our lawful Sovereign, and we trust they will not let us suffer any longer.

M'Kean County, }
Sergeant, January 17, 1827. }

P. A. Karthaus, Esqr.

Dear Sir,—I have received Mr. Gratz's letter of the 5th inst. with your note at the bottom, on the subject of the Millsburg & Smithport Turnpike, not being at present in possession of the books and papers relating to that Turnpike, I am unable to forward on the Certificate by this mail, but will have it ready by the next mail; I hope you will succeed in getting the charter this winter, I made much sacrifice in order to get the charter last winter, but for the

want of the paltry and trifling sum of about 1500 or 2000 dollars was obliged to give it up. This failure so much disheartened me that I have rested easy about it. I am in hopes of getting some more subscriptions in this county, I should like to forward 6000 dollars from this county.

Your real friend,

P. E. SCULL.

